

# Prevention

## Power

### How To Reduce Disaster Damage

# EARTHQUAKE

Since earthquakes hit with little or no warning, once the ground begins to move, it's too late to protect your home and belongings. The Federal Emergency Management Agency's *Project Impact: Building Disaster Resistant Communities* offers preventative steps homeowners, communities and businesses can take to reduce disruption and loss before disaster strikes. You can't prevent earthquakes, but... you can prevent the damage.

#### Tips anyone can tackle:

- Know your risk – contact your local emergency management office or building department or visit the *Project Impact* Web site at [www.fema.gov/impact](http://www.fema.gov/impact) to learn about potential risk areas for your community.
- Anchor electronics, such as televisions and computers, using Velcro or straps.
- Move heavy or breakable items to lower cabinets and shelves.
- Avoid hanging heavy mirrors or framed art above beds and couches.
- Move heavy or tall furniture away from seating areas and exits.
- Store hazardous materials in secure places, separate incompatible chemicals, and promptly and properly dispose of hazardous materials.

#### Tips a do-it-yourselfer can tackle:

- Install “child-proof” locks to cabinets and drawers to prevent falling items.
- Anchor bookcases and other tall or heavy furniture to the walls.
- Anchor eyebolts to wall studs for hanging heavy items such as pictures, mirrors and shelving.
- Secure large kitchen and laundry appliances to walls, floors or countertops as appropriate.
- Securely strap the water heater to the wall studs.

#### Tips that require an expert's help:

*Project Impact* strongly recommends that homeowners hire or consult a qualified professional for assistance with the following prevention measures:

- Inspecting and repairing deep cracks in the home's ceiling or foundation.
- Inspecting and repairing faulty electrical wiring and gas leaks.
- Bolting sill plates to the foundation.
- Reinforcing cripple walls.
- Reinforcing or replacing masonry chimneys.
- Installing flexible pipe fittings to avoid gas or water leaks.
- Securely anchoring fuel tanks and wood-burning stoves.
- Securely anchoring manufactured homes.

**ABOUT PROJECT IMPACT:** Since its inception in 1997, 250 communities representing over 900 jurisdictions and 2,500 business partners have embraced *Project Impact*. Instead of waiting for disasters to occur, *Project Impact* communities plan mitigation projects, develop private and public partnerships, initiate mentoring relationships, and conduct public outreach to reduce damage from potentially devastating disasters. Previous community projects have included creating disaster resistance strategies, revising local building and land use codes, and passing bond issues to construct prevention measures that will impact the entire community.



For more information about *Project Impact* or preventing damage, call your local emergency manager, *Project Impact* community coordinator or FEMA's *Project Impact* at (202) 646-4117 or visit [www.fema.gov/impact](http://www.fema.gov/impact).